

Homeland Security Department to have a state-of-the-art communications infrastructure. The Department needs that infrastructure to ensure the smooth functioning of everything from routine daily operations to terrorism response efforts. To understand the importance of a strong communications network, we only need to look back a few weeks ago, when radio communications failed in a Washington Metro tunnel as emergency officials worked to rescue passengers trapped aboard a smoke-filled train.

H.R. 361, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, would use grant funding to enhance our nation's preparedness for chemical and biological events. It is an unfortunate fact of modern life that our nation faces genuine threats from chemical and biological attacks. It makes sense for us to take precautions which will put us in a position to deal with such attacks if they occur.

Finally, H.R. 623, the Social Media Working Group Act of 2015, would authorize the Department of Homeland Security to establish a social media working group, which would offer guidance to the emergency preparedness and response community on how to use social media. I have spent years using social media to communicate with my constituents, and have found it extremely effective in rapidly disseminating important information to a wide audience. Emergency services need to be taught how they can best use social media to quickly and effectively communicate with Americans in the period surrounding a terrorist attack or other crisis.

All three of these bills take sensible steps to further protect the American people against threats to their well-being. I urge the House to pass these bills.

HONORING AURELIA GREENE

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 2, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the people who devote their lives so selflessly to public service are the ones who transform and change entire communities. Such has been the case with Aurelia Greene, my longtime friend and partner in government, whose distinguished career of public service has made a positive, lasting impact on the Bronx and far beyond.

A native Bronxite, Aurelia is a graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University, where she majored in Community Development. Following school she became a Public Agency Administrator, a prelude to her eventual calling in government. She was elected female district leader for the 76th district before winning the Assembly seat in the Bronx's 77th district in 1981. For the next 27 years, Aurelia served in the Assembly with distinction, using her urban planning skills to negotiate for affordable housing, healthcare, a quality education and employment opportunities for all New Yorkers. She regularly sponsored educational and informational seminars to aid her constituents on issues of concern, and worked hard to bring economic development and businesses to her district.

Aurelia's legislative achievements are many, as she introduced and passed a number of important bills in the State Legislature during

her time as Assemblywoman. Rising through the ranks, she became the Speaker Pro Tempore of the Assembly in 2006, the first African-American to hold the prestigious position which oversees the chamber in the absence of the Assembly Speaker. She also chaired the Assembly's Bronx delegation as the longest serving member in the Assembly from the Bronx.

In 2009, Aurelia was asked to serve as Deputy Borough President by newly elected Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. She has been a steady voice and excellent confidant for the borough president ever since.

Aurelia celebrated her 80th birthday in October, 2014 at a gala brunch hosted in her honor. As I was in attendance, I had the great pleasure of wishing her nothing but the very best on the occasion, and thanked her for all of her amazing service to the public good.

DR. ALVIN V. BLOUNT, JR.

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 2, 2015

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, today it is with great pleasure that I rise to commemorate the contributions of Dr. Alvin V. Blount, Jr., a decorated veteran, civil servant and pioneer. Dr. Blount is not only a decorated military surgeon; he is also recognized as an outstanding physician in the Greensboro medical community.

Dr. Blount was born February 24, 1922, in Raleigh, North Carolina, and was the eldest of four children. He attended North Carolina A&T University in 1939 and graduated magna cum laude in 1943. After completing his undergraduate degree, he attended Howard University earning his Medical degree in 1947.

After, Dr. Blount entered the military as a member of the U.S. Army Medical Corps. He served two tours of military duty in Korea during the War and returned to Greensboro in 1952. In 1957, Dr. Blount, a surgeon by training, became the first African American in North Carolina to earn the American College of Abdominal Surgeons' certification.

In 1964, Dr. Blount championed the integration of Cone Hospital in Greensboro and would become the first African American to operate there. Dr. Blount's distinguished surgical career includes service as chief of surgery for L. Richardson Hospital; a position he held for 23 years. He was also responsible for establishing the hospital's first quality improvement committee.

On February 1, 2007, Dr. Alvin V. Blount, Jr., received the 2007 Human Rights Medal from his alma mater North Carolina A&T State University. The Human Rights Medal is one of the highest awards given by the University and it is presented to an individual for their extraordinary contributions to humanity.

Dr. Blount Jr. has been married to Gwendolyn Harris for over 40 years. They are the proud parents of seven children. They also have nine grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Blount's contributions to our great nation are many. He bravely served his country during the Korean War and was time and time again a trailblazer in the field of medicine. I ask my colleagues join me in expressing the appreciation of a grateful nation.

RECOGNIZING ALCALDESSA MARCIE WALDRON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 2, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Marcie Waldron, who has been named the City of Sonoma's 2015 Alcaldessa, or Honorary Mayor. The title "Alcalde," or "Alcaldessa" when referring to a woman, is the Spanish word for "mayor." While the Alcalde was the primary civil authority during the Spanish colonial period in California, in modern times, it is an honorary title bestowed upon invaluable members of the community.

Ms. Waldron has lived in Sonoma for 12 years, where she has given back to the community as a leader and member of community organizations. She is the president of the Vintage House board, a non-profit organization that promotes the well-being of elderly citizens by encouraging independence and involvement in community life. Ms. Waldron also serves as the interim president of the WillMar Family Grief and Healing Center, which provides support to families grieving the loss of a loved one or living with family members with a life-altering illness. Outside of her leadership roles with these non-profit organizations, Ms. Waldron serves as a board member of the Sonoma Community Center and Kiwanis of Sonoma Plaza.

In addition to her involvement in community organizations, Ms. Waldron works to raise awareness about organ donation. Herself a double transplant recipient, Ms. Waldron speaks to schools and organizations honoring donors and stressing the importance of organ donation. Ms. Waldron also works to recognize donors through her "LifeStar" program, which gives donors hand-made silver LifeStar pendants in appreciation for their gift of life.

Mr. Speaker, Marcie Waldron is a beloved and vitally important member of the community and it is appropriate that we acknowledge her today as Sonoma's Alcaldessa for 2015.

HONORING YONKERS KIWANIS CLUB

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 2, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, civic organizations play an indispensable role in our society by serving their communities and setting responsible public examples of how volunteerism and service can assist, enrich and inspire rising generations. Civic pride is truly the tie that binds our nation together.

The feeling of belonging to the larger whole, and the practice of serving the greater good is part and parcel of our responsibilities to each other. Those are the tenants that have guided the Yonkers Kiwanis Club, which celebrated its 85th year of service to the Yonkers community in 2014.

The Yonkers Kiwanis Club received its Charter on November 11, 1929, and has been an integral part of the community for decades. Since its founding, the Yonkers Kiwanis Club